

# San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

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**TO:** Rising Sea Level Working Group Members

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**SUBJECT: April 2, 2015 Commission Rising Sea Level Working Group Meeting Summary**

1. **Roll Call, Introductions and Approval of Agenda.** Rising Sea Level Working Group Member, Kate Sears called the meeting to order at approximately 11:10 am. Commissioners present: Chair Wasserman, Doherty, Gibbs, McElhinney, Pine, Sears, and Zwissler. Also attending: Commissioner Randolph, Amy Hutzel (Coastal Conservancy), Leslie Alden (Marin County), and Will Travis

2. **Approval of March 5, 2015 Working Group Meeting Summary.** The meeting summary was approved with no corrections or comments.

3. **Surviving the Storm.** Commissioner Sean Randolph of the Bay Area Council Economic Institute, and Amy Hutzel of the State Coastal Conservancy presented a draft of their report “Surviving the Storm” that estimates the economic cost to the Bay Area of an extreme storm under 2015 conditions. Commissioner Randolph reported that:

- a. The report will be publicly issued on April 20, 2015
- b. URS developed the storm event scenarios used to assess impacts
- c. Their analysis identified Marin and Santa Clara Counties as most vulnerable
- d. Flooding from rivers and creeks was the largest source of impacts
- e. The cost of impacts was conservatively estimated to be about \$10 billion, similar to the costs of the Loma Prieta earthquake. Costs were primarily for physical damage, not disruption of economic or social activity; assumed that the affected areas would be back up and running in a few days. Costs assumed no permanent damage to highway infrastructure.
- f. The report did not focus on rising sea level, but considered it.
- g. The report covered a variety of geographies, evaluated flood control infrastructure, and used case studies of: Alameda Creek, Napa Valley, Ross Valley (Marin), Walnut Creek, San Francisquito Creek, the Guadalupe River, San Francisco and Oakland airports, and downtown San Francisco to name a few.
- h. The report includes several recommendations, including support for the Bay Restoration Authority’s ballot measure for a parcel tax.

Commissioner Doherty reported that NOAA will soon be publishing maps that forecast flooding from combined tidal and fluvial sources, using a combination of various model outputs.

**3. San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority.** Amy Hutzel of the State Coastal Conservancy updated the Working Group on the efforts of the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority. She reported that the Authority was considering alternatives to a parcel tax, and possibly a June 2016 measure, such as a regional general obligation bond that would provide more restoration funding and provide it earlier, and that the bond could be less regressive than a parcel tax. Assembly Member Ting has submitted a bill to extend the date the Authority sunsets until 2049 and to expand its bonding authority beyond the current limit of 10 percent of the previous year's proceeds. The Baylands Steering Committee is engaged and supportive. Fund raising for a campaign is challenging. Also, with a bond, a specific expenditure plan is easier, than with a parcel tax. The Surviving the Storm Report is a key part of the campaign.

Chair Wasserman suggested that the Risky Business report could also help, as well as BCDC's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and the upcoming State of the Estuary Conference. Commissioner Doherty said that in the fall, the Energy Commission will release a report summarizing adaptation science, and together with FEMA's map modernization effort, taken together, all could help make for a strong campaign in support of a bond.

**4. Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals Science Update.** Amy Hutzel of the State Coastal Conservancy used power point slides to present the nearly completed Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals Science Update. The Baylands Goals were developed in 1999, and the current update integrates, in part, considerations of climate change and sea level rise, transition zones, and better connections between baylands and local watersheds. She reported that the goals were initiated in part because of controversy surrounding US Fish and Wildlife Service mitigation requirements for the Sonoma Baylands restoration project. She reported that:

- a. The goal of 100,000 acres of tidal marsh remains unchanged.
- b. The update focused on the effects of future changes, such as sea level rise, rising temperatures, changes in: precipitation, sediment supply, freshwater inflows, salinity and nutrients.
- c. The Update better integrates processes and functions, and is planned for release in the fall of 2015.
- d. She summarized the many recommendations in the report and discussed the thresholds for action and necessary lead time periods.

Will Travis reported that he along with the Bay Planning Coalition has formed an International Sea Level Rise Institute non-profit with John Englander and Gary Griggs, and is seeking funding to support its work. The objective is to increase reporting on what is happening around the world on sea level rise adaptation. Another focus could be to establish resilience standards similar to LEED standards for buildings.